Updates and Proposed Actions Related to School Improvement, School Breakfast, and Preschool

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School Improvement

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Educational Challenges

- **In the last five years:**
  - the number of economically disadvantaged students has grown from 34 to 41 percent of Virginia's public school students;
  - English Language Learners in Virginia have grown to 95,000, an increase of 15 percent;
  - the percentage of students with the most need for intensive special education, such as autism and other health impairments, has grown by 23 percent to 46,865.
- **Subgroups of students, such as Economically Disadvantaged, English Language Learners, and Special Education, require more intensive interventions and more resources to teach.**
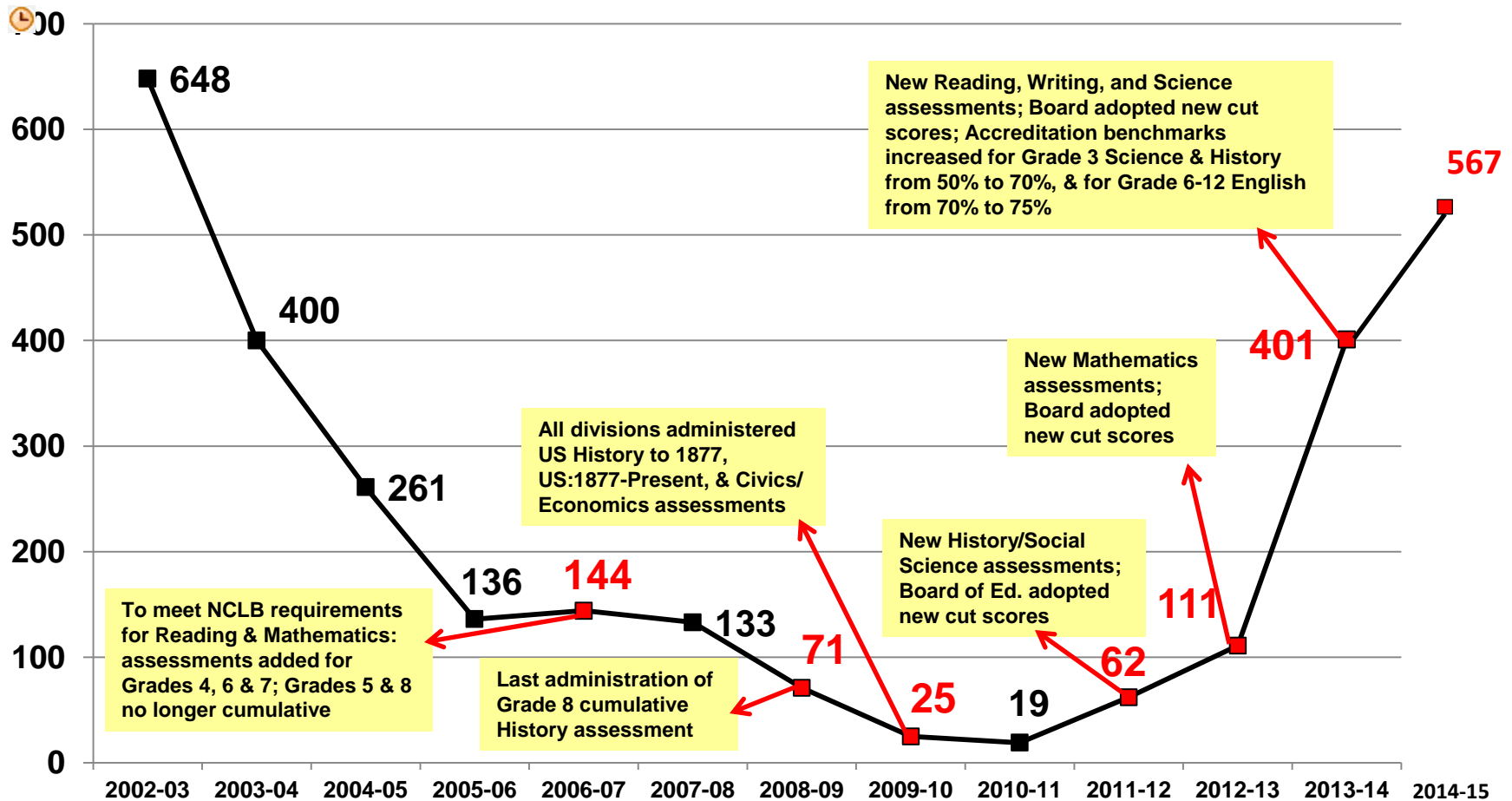
Educational Challenges

- **In FY 2014, General Fund Direct Aid to Public Education is $308 million less than it was in FY 2007.**

- **Since 2008, K-12 public education staffing has been reduced by 5,000 positions in Virginia. The top critical shortage area among endorsed teachers is Special Education.**

Schools Not *Fully Accredited*
2002-2003 through 2014-2015

Chart: Schools Not Fully Accredited by school year

- 2002-03: 648
- 2003-04: 400
- 2004-05: 261
- 2005-06: 136
- 2006-07: 144
- 2007-08: 133
- 2008-09: 71
- 2009-10: 25
- 2010-11: 19
- 2011-12: 62
- 2012-13: 111
- 2013-14: 401
- 2014-15: 567

Annotations:

New Reading, Writing, and Science assessments; Board adopted new cut scores; Accreditation benchmarks increased for Grade 3 Science & History from 50% to 70%, & for Grade 6-12 English from 70% to 75%

New Mathematics assessments; Board adopted new cut scores

All divisions administered US History to 1877, US:1877-Present, & Civics/Economics assessments

New History/Social Science assessments; Board of Ed. adopted new cut scores

To meet NCLB requirements for Reading & Mathematics: assessments added for Grades 4, 6 & 7; Grades 5 & 8 no longer cumulative

Last administration of Grade 8 cumulative History assessment

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Support to Challenged Schools

Support and interventions to schools not fully accredited are graduated depending upon the number of years of failure to achieve full accreditation, including years of *Accreditation with Warning* status.

1. Academic review by an external team, with focus on curriculum alignment and engagement of school division leadership in process

2. Development and monitoring of a school improvement plan

3. Assignment of an external contractor to school to guide actions and support building level efforts

4. Ongoing technical assistance and professional development in instruction and assessment

5. Monitoring by Virginia Department of Education Office of School Improvement staff

Some Success

As a result of testing results in 2013-14, 74 schools exited *Accreditation with Warning* status in 2014-2015.

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Focus on "Customization" of Interventions for 2014-2015

For 2014-2015, the Department is focusing on increased customization of interventions for schools that have been accredited with warning for more than three consecutive years.

- collaboratively developed Conditional Accreditation Agreements for schools granted Conditional Accreditation. The agreements outline Essential Actions that must be completed based on specific needs of the school.

- additional customization of the Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between the local school board and the Virginia Board of Education for schools that are denied accreditation. Department staff met with the division superintendent for each denied school to identify areas in which the school needed support. Using this information, the MOUs were customized for each school.

Next Steps

- **Focus on attracting and retaining quality teachers in struggling schools**

- **Continued focus on improving quality of instruction in classroom and the capacity of principals to provide helpful feedback to teachers**

- **Proposed budget initiative to fund additional training for principals**

- **Emphasis on providing "wrap around" services for students**

VDOE Budget Proposals

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FY16 Budget Proposals Focusing on Challenged Schools - SB 800 as Introduced

- **Training to increase principal capacity in challenged schools ($713,000 GF)**

- **Language allowing use of VPI balances for waiting list slots in divisions with 100 percent VPI participation**

- **Expansion of the school breakfast program (incentives for "Breakfast after the Bell" models) ($537,297 GF)**

- **Expedited retakes of SOL tests at elementary/middle grades ($200,000 GF)**

- **5 DOE positions supporting challenged schools ($572,976 GF)**

School Breakfast and Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

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Current Breakfast Funding for Increased Student Participation

- Incentive funding for improved student participation - available to divisions that increase per student breakfast participation above 2003-2004 baseline established using each division's base-year breakfast participation

- Proposed funding in SB 800: $3.5M in FY15; $3.9M in FY16

- $0.22 provided for each meal served above base-year number of meals served per student per division. Uses prior year data – FY15 payment based on student participation from 2013-2014 compared to base year

- Funds used to increase student access/participation, such as reducing student meal prices. Helped stimulate 56.5 percentage increase in breakfasts served over 10 years and 200+ percentage increase in federal reimbursements

Proposed "Breakfast After the Bell" State Funding Incentive

- **For FY16, new funding incentive for alternative methods for serving breakfast – such as grab and go breakfast, breakfast in the classroom, and breakfast after the bell. $537,297 is proposed in SB 800.**

- **Encourage schools with time and space limitations to implement alternate methods increasing student access to breakfast, overcoming barriers such as late bus schedules and limited cafeteria space.**

- **Allows instructional time to be maximized by getting students in classrooms and starting the school day while breakfast is being served and/or eaten.**

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"Breakfast After the Bell"
State Funding Incentive

Opportunity to increase federal funding and improve learning readiness by offering breakfast closer to the instructional day.

DOE to set criteria for serving models eligible for reimbursement at $0.05 per meal, paid monthly.

Eligibility for the funding is limited to meals served after the first bell; however, flexibility could be provided where meals are served before, but eaten after, the first bell.

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

- **Federal initiative – new to Virginia for 2014-2015. Can be implemented in individual schools, groups of schools, or divisionwide.**

- **Meals served at no cost to students. Eligible divisions/schools agree to participate for 4 successive years.**

- **Eliminates collecting household applications for free/reduced price meals in high poverty divisions and schools.**

- **"Identified Student Percentage (ISP)" – division/school must have at least 40 percent of students eligible for free meals by Direct Certification without application (via SNAP, TANF, homeless, migrant, runaway, foster child, Head Start) to be eligible.**

- **Divisions reimbursed using a multiplier of 1.6 times the ISP. Schools at 62.5 percent or more ISP reimbursed at the free rate for all meals (i.e., 62.5% X 1.6 = 100%). Schools with 40 percent to 62.4 percent ISP reimbursed for some meals at paid rate and must use non-federal funds to cover any meal costs not covered by the federal funds.**

2014-2015 CEP Participation

- **11 divisions with 86 schools and 42,911 students participating in 2014-2015:**
  - 4 divisionwide - 60 sites and 30,209 students (Brunswick, Petersburg, Franklin City, Richmond City)
  - 7 divisions with at least 1 site - 26 sites and 12,702 students (Franklin Co., Fredericksburg, Greensville, Hampton, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk)

- **79 more divisions with eligible schools but not participating – includes 438 eligible schools, 48 of which have an ISP of 62.5 percent or more and eligible for reimbursement at free rate for all meals served**

- **Anecdotal information from participating schools divisions:**
  - Meal counts have increased for lunch and breakfast, breakfast significantly
  - Federal reimbursement has increased
  - Parent and student satisfaction with school meals has increased. School administrators, parents, students, and community partners supportive and complimentary of CEP

DOE CEP Technical Assistance

DOE continues to provide technical assistance to divisions on CEP participation.

Helping divisions to assess whether participation is feasible based on ISP levels, projected federal reimbursements, and availability of non-federal funds to pay costs.

Encouraging divisions to maximize directly certified students to increase ISP and "free" reimbursement level to facilitate participation.

CEP Resources

US DOE Title I Guidance

http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SP19-2014os.pdf

FCC E-rate Guidance

http://www.fcc.gov/document/universal-service-administrative-company-3

USDA CEP Guidance and Q&A

http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cn/SP21-2014v2os.pdf

USDA CEP Estimator

http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/community-eligibility-provision

USDA Evaluation of the CEP Pilots

http://www.fns.usda.gov/community-eligibility-provision-evaluation

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Preschool

Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)

State Funded Program

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Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)

VPI Purpose

- The purpose of the state funded VPI program is to provide quality preschool programs for **at-risk four-year-olds** who are unserved by Head Start.

FY2015 Participation

- Calculated Number of VPI slots: 25,746

- Actual Number of VPI slots used: 18,250

- Total Actual State Share of VPI cost: $68.3 million

- State funds are paid directly to school divisions or local governments, which have responsibility for the programs.

Program Components

- Collaboration with community agencies and groups

- Develop selection criteria based on the community's definition of *at-risk*

- A curriculum aligned with Virginia's *Foundation Blocks for Early Learning* and administer the PK Phonological Literacy Awareness Screening (PALS) Assessment

- A group size limit of 18 and a child/staff ratio of 9:1

- Highly qualified staff

- Parent support and training opportunities

- Wrap around services including health services, social services for families and transportation services

Challenges

Divisions/localities reasons for partial use of allocation or nonparticipation include:

- Difficulty or inability to meet the required local match
- Insufficient space to house additional preschool classrooms in school facilities
- Minimal number of students eligible for the program by state allocation formula

Importance of VPI

Differential Effects of Preschool: **Curry School of Education (2011)**
- VPI participation is associated with a **reduced** likelihood of repeating kindergarten.
- Literacy effect is maintained through **first grade** for African American and Hispanic students and students with disabilities.

Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (2007)
- Analysis showed **strong association** between VPI participation and PALS (literacy) scores.
- More than 91 percent of principals surveyed cited positive effects of students' participation in preschool continuing through at least first grade.

Phonological Literacy Awareness Screening (PALS)

- The impact of participation in the VPI program can be seen in results of the fall 2014 PALS that was administered to kindergarten students.

- **93 percent** of the students who participated in a VPI program did **NOT** need intervention services in kindergarten the next school year.

- *Conversely,* **71.8 percent** of the students who did not participate in any PK program did **NOT** need intervention services in kindergarten the next school year.

Fall 2014 Kindergarten PALS

Preschool Program in which Student Participated	Total Number of Students Screened	Kindergarten Students Identified as Not Needing Intervention Services		Kindergarten Students Identified as Needing Intervention Services	
		Number of Students	Percent of Total Number of Students	Number of Students	Percent of Total Number of Students
VPI	**11,702**	**10,878**	**93%**	**824**	**7%**
Coordinated VPI Programs,	5,531	5,069	91.6%	462	8.4%
Other PreK	32,655	29,800	91.3%	2,855	8.7%
Students' PreK Status Unknown	15,522	13,455	86.7%	2,067	13.3%
No PreK	**13,622**	**9,775**	**71.8%**	**3,847**	**28.2%**
Total	**79,032**	**68,977**	**87.3%**	**10,055**	**12.7%**

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VPI Language Proposal in SB 800 as Introduced

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VPI Language Proposal for FY16 - SB 800

- **A number of divisions have waiting lists of at-risk four-year-olds they cannot serve, since they have no more state-funded VPI slots available, while other divisions do not fully utilize their state-funded slots each year.**

- **The proposed language would allow any unused but appropriated VPI funds to go to divisions using all of their state-funded slots, and also having waiting lists, to provide slots to those children on their waiting lists.**

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VPI Language Proposal for FY16 - SB 800

- **These additional slots would be funded from the appropriation remaining after actual VPI participation for FY16 is determined based on the final number of slots divisions apply for by May 15.**

- **Determining in May the amount of funding to be reallocated for waiting list slots will allow divisions receiving the funding time to plan in advance of the 2015-2016 school year.**

- **In FY15, 45 divisions used 100 percent of their state-funded VPI slots and had waiting lists totaling over 1,700 children.**

Virginia Preschool Initiative Plus (VPI+)

US Department of Education Federal Preschool Grant Program

U.S. Department of Education Preschool Grants

- Two types of grants:

- **Development Grants** are for states that currently serve less than 10 percent of *four-year-olds* and have not received a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant.

- **Expansion Grants** are for states that currently serve 10 percent or more of *four-year-olds* or have received an RTT-ELC grant. *(Virginia)*

VPI Plus (VPI+) Model

VPI+ builds from the successful Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) that has supported the school readiness of at-risk four-year-olds since 1996.

VPI+ model:
- Highly qualified teachers
- Research-tested professional development and curriculum
- Community partnerships
- Comprehensive services and pathways to fully engage parents and families

VPI+ Selection

- **Criteria for Division Selection**

  1. Poverty Concentration: Percentage of students eligible for free/reduced lunch

  2. Poverty Magnitude: Number of Title I schools

  3. Unmet Need: Number of unused VPI slots

  4. Unmet Need: Percentage of students not meeting the PALS-K benchmark

- **Participating Divisions:** *Brunswick, Chesterfield, Fairfax, Giles, Henrico, Norfolk, Petersburg, Prince William, Richmond, Sussex, Winchester*

VPI+ Overview

Year 1 Federal Award Amount

- $ 17,500,000 *(3 additional years)*
- January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2018

Lead Agency

- Virginia Department of Education

Partnerships & Support

- Eleven Divisions & local public-private partnerships
- Virginia Department of Social Services
- Virginia Early Childhood Foundation/Smart Beginnings
- UVA Center for the Adv. Study of Teaching and Learning
- Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success

VPI+ Classrooms

- **96** existing classrooms serving **1,470** students

- **100** new classrooms increasing to **1,669** students

- **Over 3,100** four-year-olds at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line will be served by the end of the grant through VPI+ in eleven local school divisions